

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 have been amended and remain in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 8-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The examiner specifically pointed to "computer program comprising instructions" as being directed towards nonstatutory subject matter.

This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claim 8-11, as amended. Claims 8-11 have been amended to recite a computer readable recording medium having a program recorded therein that allows a computer to perform the combination of functions recited in the claims. It is respectfully submitted that claims 8-11, as amended, are in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bezos et al. (European Patent Application EP 0 927 945, published on 07 July 1999).

This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1-11, as amended.

The claims, as amended, define a system and method for managing address data comprising a number of elements in combination. In representative claim 1, for example, the claimed combination includes an address data storing unit which stores destination address data of candidates for a recipient of merchandise. The destination address data is categorized based on orderers' groups to which each of a plurality of merchandise orderers belongs, and identification data unique to each of the plurality of orderers.

In contrast, Bezos teaches "Alternatively, a single address book for a user containing the information for all possible recipients can be maintained. The user specifies a group by indicating some of the recipients whose addresses are in the address book. The use of address books facilitates, the maintaining of multiple groups that have one or more recipients in common" (paragraph 28, lines 35-49).

Bezos thereby teaches that information for all possible recipients in the address book may be categorized based on multiple groups, each of which has one or more recipients. However, each such multiple group is associated with only a single orderer, since the address book is the personal address book of the orderer (as acknowledged at page 37, lines 17-19 of the Office Action). Consequently, Bezos' address book must be individually prepared for each orderer (i.e., each user). Bezos fails to disclose or suggest categorizing address information based on multiple groups having several different orderers.

In contrast to Bezos, amended claims 1, 4 and 8 recite orderers' groups to which each of a plurality of orderers for merchandise belongs. Each of those orderers' groups may include a plurality of different members. Moreover, amended claims 1, 4 and 8 recite that destination address data of candidates for receipt of merchandise is categorized based on the orderers' groups. Therefore, the destination address data can be commonly used among all members who belong to one of the orderers' groups. A similar combination of elements is neither disclosed nor suggested by Bezos.

The examiner states further that in Bezos only the orderer is associated with each of the multiple groups (see page 37, lines 20-21 of the Office Action). Therefore, the orderer must indicate some of the recipients to specify one of the multiple groups (see Bezos, Paragraph 0028, lines 37-39). The orderer cannot obtain group information unless the orderer indicates some of the recipients.

In clear contrast to this acknowledged disclosure in Bezos, amended claim 1 defines a combination including an address data storing unit, a first specification processing unit and a second specification processing unit. Therefore, in the combination defined by claim 1, there is no requirement that the orderer must indicate some of the recipients to specify the orderer's group. The orderer can obtain destination address data of candidates for a recipient even when the orderer cannot specify the orderer's group. A similar combination is neither disclosed nor suggested in Bezos.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.

116692004400.

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